

# The Daybook

Vol. 8 Issue 3

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### About The Daybook and the Museum

*The Daybook* is an authorized publication of the Hampton Roads Naval Museum (HRNM). Its contents do not necessarily reflect the official view of the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, the U.S. Navy, or the U.S. Marine Corps and do not imply endorsement thereof. Book reviews are solely the opinion of the reviewer.

The HRNM is operated and funded by Commander, Navy Region, Mid-Atlantic. The museum is dedicated to the study of 225 years of naval history in the Hampton Roads region. It is also responsible for the historic interpretation of the battleship *Wisconsin*.

The museum is open daily. Call for information on *Wisconsin's* hours of operations. Admission to the museum and *Wisconsin* are free. *The Daybook's* purpose is to educate and inform readers on historical topics and museum related events. It is written by the staff and volunteers of the museum.

Questions or comments can be directed to the Hampton Roads Naval Museum editor. *The Daybook* can be reached at 757-322-2993, by fax at 757-445-1867, e-mail at [gbcalthoun@nsn.cmar.navy.mil](mailto:gbcalthoun@nsn.cmar.navy.mil), or write *The Daybook*, Hampton Roads Naval Museum, One Waterside Drive, Suite 248, Norfolk, VA 23510-1607. The museum can be found on the World Wide Web at <http://www.hrnm.navy.mil>.

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Rear Adm. David Architzel  
Commander, Navy Region, Mid-Atlantic

### HRNM Staff

#### Director

Becky Poulliot

#### Curator

Joe Judge

#### Education Specialist

Bob Matteson

#### Exhibits Specialist

Marta Nelson

#### Museum Tech./Librarian

Ofelia Elbo

#### Editor of The Daybook

Gordon Calhoun

#### Architectural Historian

Michael Taylor

#### Battleship Wisconsin

#### Operations Manager

Captain Mary Mosier,

USN (Ret.)

#### Special Events/Education

Kathryn Shaffner

#### Volunteer Coordinator

Thomas Dandes

#### Public Relations

Jared Myers

#### HRNM OIC

GMC (SW) Keith Ryan

#### Ceremonies/LCPO

NCC (SW) Lisa Robinson

#### Special Projects

BMC (SW) Larry Corfey

#### Education Assistants

LIC (SW) Michael Roberts

LI3 Darrell Medina

#### Director, HRNHF

Maj.Gen. Dennis Murphy,

USMC (Ret.)

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A 100th Anniversary You Don't Know About, But Should

**Cover Illustration:** When you were a teenager, what did you want to do with the rest of your life? For Henry Myers, the choice was easy: he wanted to be an officer in the United States Navy. Being the son of famed Norfolk merchant Moses Myers, Henry was no doubt inspired to sign up in the Navy by the frequent visits by current Naval officers. So Henry became a midshipman at the ripe old age of 16. He soon found, however, that Navy life is not all glamor and wrestled with the idea of leaving the service.

# You've Gotta Have HEART!

## The Director's Column

by Becky Poulliot

Our educational staff just received word that a collaborative program with the Virginia Beach City Public Schools just got funded by the U.S. Department of Education. I used the grant title for this column, with HEART forming the clever acronym that means History Engages, Amazes, Remembers, and Teaches.

So, what does all of this mean for HRNM? MORE WORK!! We will be delivering our very own "Hunter, Hunted and Homefront" program to many more Virginia Beach schoolchildren in the upcoming months. The grant will provide bussing for middle-schoolers to visit us, the MacArthur Memorial and the Portsmouth Children's Museum.

The Hampton Roads Naval Museum continued its teacher workshop series for the third time again this fall. Fifth through 12<sup>th</sup> grade teachers from public and private schools in Norfolk, Virginia Beach, Portsmouth and the Peninsula attended a five hour workshop on World War II. Teachers toured the World War II gallery of the museum and the decks of the *Wisconsin* and attended seminars about the Battle of the Atlantic and WWII attack submarines in the Pacific. They then proceeded to the MacArthur Memorial after lunch for the second half of the program.

On November 2<sup>nd</sup>, area teachers attended a Civil War teacher workshop where staff members, docent **Jim Reid**, **Mike Conelly** and **Alan Mordica** of the Mariner's Museum did presentations on the various aspects of the Civil War Navy. HRNM hopes to further expand these workshops to cover topics such as the Spanish-American War, the Revolutionary War Navy and World War I. HRNM's portion of the HEART education grant will provide funding to print educational materials, hire speakers and further expand the workshop series.

We simply couldn't work on projects such as these without the support of our



*HRNM docent John Peters receives the blazer patch for his 500 hours of volunteer service. The museum is always seeking new volunteers for both the gallery and the Battleship *Wisconsin*. Call 322-2986 for more information. (Photo by Tom Dandes)*

volunteers. The museum is undertaking a volunteer drive this winter, so if you know of anyone who might fit the bill, please call me directly. Word of mouth has been the number #1 way that we continue to recruit our volunteer staff. The criteria for being a volunteer consists of interest in naval history and willingness to work to promote this history through interpreting artifacts. We are particularly interested in volunteers who enjoy talking to people and conducting tours and special programs. Our top priority now is to train volunteers to conduct programs for schoolchildren.

As a way of thanks, once again the Hampton Roads Naval Historical Foundation has generously agreed to sponsor a volunteer appreciation dinner. More details to follow in a formal invitation, but please mark your calendars for the evening of January 23, 2003.

Good fortune continues to smile upon us with the addition of several very talented new staff members. It is a pleasure to introduce you to **BMC(SW) Larry Corfey**, a boatswain mate, who is spending the last six months of his service to the Navy here

at HRNM. Chief Corfey just arrived from the Destroyer *Barry* (DD-933). He is busily working with our Battleship Operations Manager Mary Mosier to come up with some new *Wisconsin*-related programs for students. He is also on tap to present these programs. Another new addition to our



*HRNM docents Henry Tarrell and Seth Wilson lay a wreath as part of the Veteran's Day ceremonies aboard *Wisconsin*. Henry is a veteran of the 82nd Airborne and Seth is a retired veteran of the battleship. (Photo by Jared Myers)*

military staff is **LIC(SW/AW) Michael Roberts**, a talented lithographer, who will offer his artistic talents and conduct educational programs. Be sure to see page four concerning our new educational space in the museum gallery.

*Becky*

# Museum Receives North Carolina Naval Militia Uniform

by Gordon Calhoun

The museum recently received a 1900 enlisted sailor's blue jacket. The uniform belonged to Second Class Boatswain's Mate Leonard K. Rutter who served in the U.S. Navy and the North Carolina State Naval Militia. It was given to us by Rutter's grand-nephew. The donor also has in his possession a Rutter's marksmanship medal, which he has elected to keep.

The uniform differs from a typical enlisted sailor's outfit, its style resembles an officer type. It is a button-up jacket with a hook and clasp around the collar, which today is informally called a "choker" type uniform. The jacket material is a navy blue

Organized along similar lines to the Army National Guard, states with a coastline were expected to raise a militia. The Navy gave or loaned at least one ship to each reserve unit. Often, the ships were named for the state's official mascot or trait. For example, members of the Minnesota State Naval Militia operated the USS *Gopher*. During the Spanish-American War many of the naval militiamen served in the militarily useless, but psychologically important, patrols along the Eastern seaboard.

Rutter's unit trained with the armed yacht USS *Hornet*, which it

received on loan from the Navy in 1900. We do know that Rutter served on active duty in the Spanish-American War, and it is possible he served on board *Hornet*. But at this time we do not know if he served with *Hornet* or on another vessel. We are currently researching his military service records to find out more.

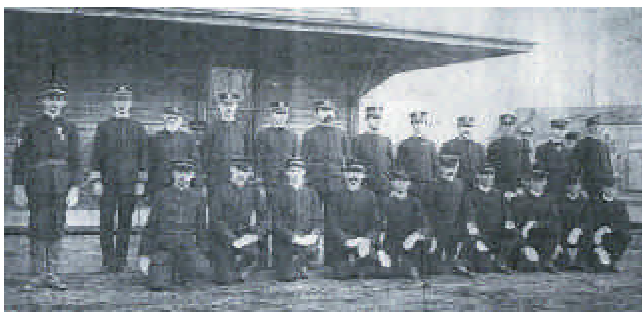
If he did serve on *Hornet* during the war, he would have had a very active war record. The Navy purchased the yacht from a private owner at the start of the war. The service had her armed, crewed, commissioned, and sent to the war zone in just twelve days.

*Hornet* participated in several actions that were typical of the war. This included an ill advised, yet heroic attack on Spanish defenses near the Cuban port of Manzanillo where *Hornet* and two other gunboats sunk one Spanish warship.

The next day



The museum recently received the uniform of BM2 Leonard K. Rutter. Petty Officer Rutter was a veteran of the Spanish-American War and a member of the North Carolina Naval Militia. (Photo by Gordon Calhoun)



BM2 Rutter stands with his unit wearing the now donated uniform as they prepare to leave for the 1902 South Carolina Exposition in Charleston. Rutter is in the second row on the far left. The decoration Rutter is wearing is a marksmanship medal. (Photo provided by William H. Meissel)

colored wool.

There are two sets of markings on the uniform. Rutter's rating badge, two anchors, is displayed on his right sleeve. The Boatswain's Mate rate was classified as a "right-arm" rate along with ratings such hull-technicians and gunner's mates.

The jacket's collar is the most intriguing part of the artifact. On the collar are the letters "ECD." When the donor brought in the uniform, he was not sure what the letters meant. But after some study, the donor and the museum staff determined that it stood for "Elizabeth City Division," Rutter's naval militia unit.

State naval militias were founded in the late 1800's and early 1900's to create a body of trained reserves for the maritime services.

*Hornet's* squadron decided to attack the port again. During this second assault, Spanish guns found their mark and cut *Hornet's* main steam line. Despite the ship's predicament, *Hornet* kept firing at the shore batteries and even turned her guns on a Spanish sloop trying to sneak into the harbor during the battle. After the sloop went down, *Hornet* was towed to safety. She was sent to Norfolk for repairs and decommission. After a year in mothballs, the Navy loaned her to North Carolina.



Even though the uniform looks like an officer's uniform, state naval militias used it for enlisted sailors. It was only recently discovered that "E.C.D." stood for "Elizabeth City Division," of the North Carolina Naval Militia. (Photo by Gordon Calhoun)

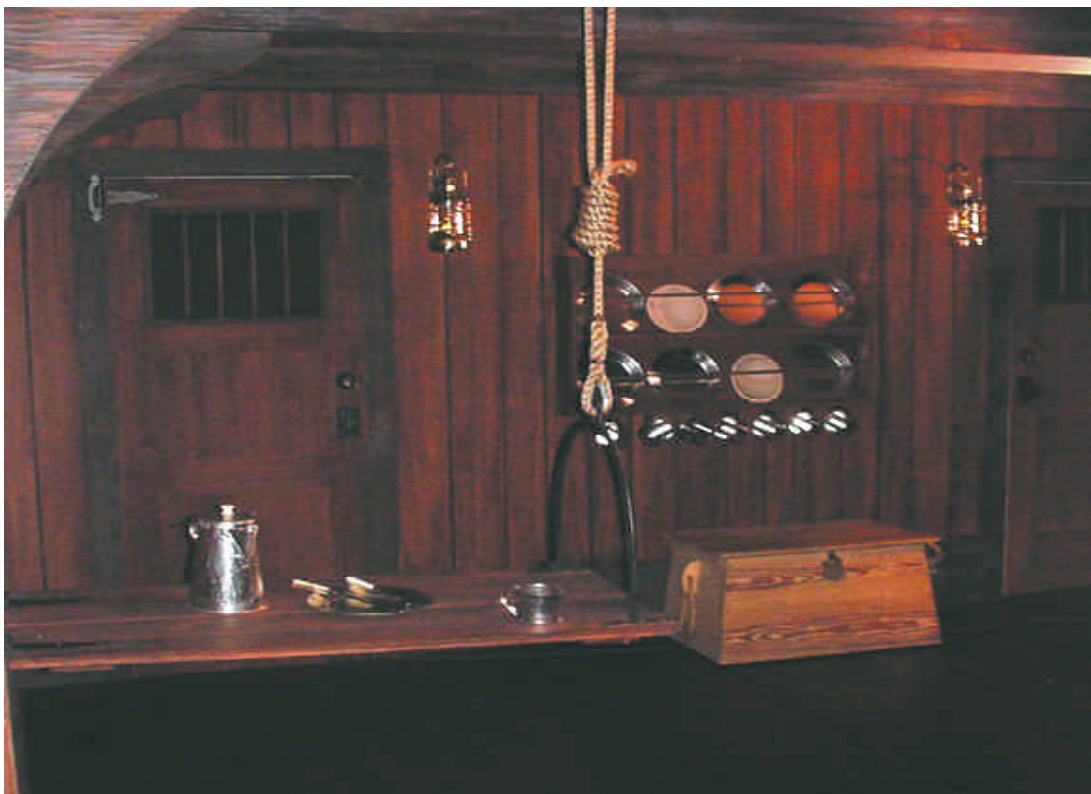
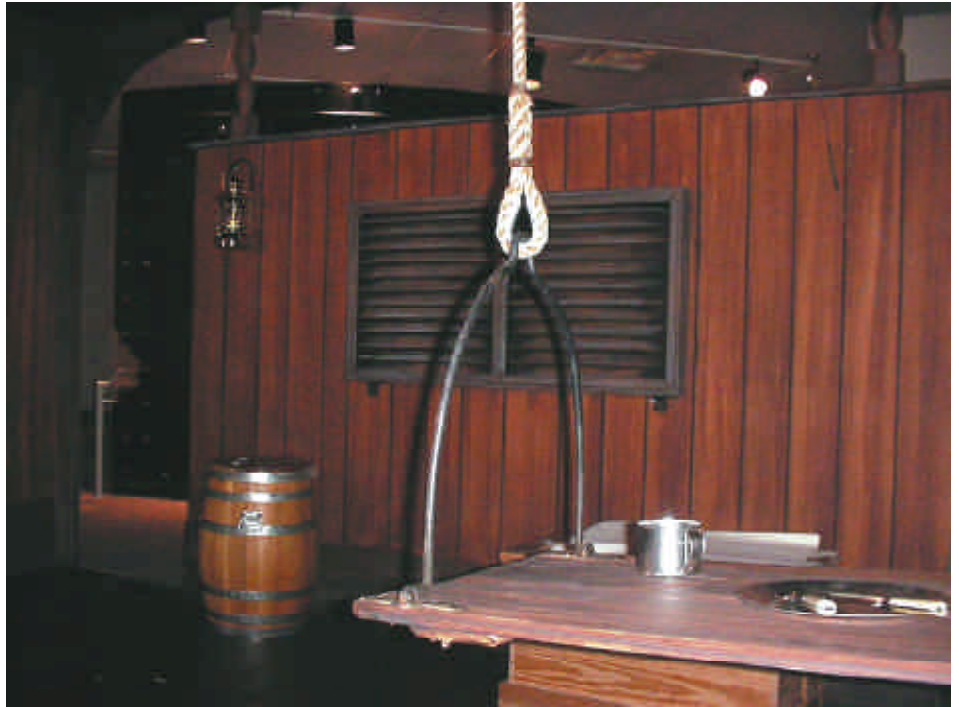


# Museum Builds New Education Space

The museum is proud to announce the construction of a new educational facility that will soon house SOL-based programs presented to over 9,000 local school students each year. The space was designed and installed by Virginia Scenic under the guidance of museum exhibit designer Marta Nelson.

“We found that school groups were often distracted during the programs by passersby in the museum,” noted Kathryn Shaffner, one of the museum’s educators. “The new facility allows the groups to remain on task and, thus, remain more receptive to the programs.”

The new space takes the place of “The Civil War in Hampton Roads,” a fiber optic light map that the museum brought over from its old location at the Pennsylvania Building. The museum will begin using the space on a full time basis with its 3rd grade “Life at Sea” education program early next year.



# Veterans Return to Their Ship

During the first weekend in September, veterans of the Battleship *Wisconsin* held their bi-annual reunion here in Norfolk. On September 6, the veterans came aboard their old ship for a rare interior visit and held a memorial for shipmates who have passed away since the 2000 reunion in Mobile, Alabama. Here are some of the scenes from that day.



Over 185 Wisconsin veterans from all different periods of the battleship's service lined up on the ship's quarterdeck to sign the veterans' log. The log is one way that veterans visiting the ship can look up the names of old shipmates. (Photo by Jared Myers)



A priest gives the opening prayer at the beginning of the ceremony. Veterans from every time period returned to their ship for the four day reunion. (Photo by GM1 Thomas Lowney)



Members of the Wisconsin Association prepare to jettison a wreath covered with carnations to honor each of the veterans who had passed away since the group's last reunion in 2000. (Photo by Jared Myers)



A color guard from the Naval Station Norfolk Marine Security Battalion presents colors to the 600-plus Wisconsin veterans and their families during the memorial service on the Wisconsin fantail. (Photo by GM1 Thomas Lowney)

## Wisconsin Visitor Information

### General Information:

757-322-2987

<http://www.hrn.m.navy.mil>

### Volunteer Opportunities:

757-322-3106

[tdandes@nsn.cmar.navy.mil](mailto:tdandes@nsn.cmar.navy.mil)

### Honor and Ceremonies:

757-322-2988

[lkrobinson@nsn.cmar.navy.mil](mailto:lkrobinson@nsn.cmar.navy.mil)

### Historical Information:

757-322-2993 or 322-2984

[gbcalthoun@nsn.cmar.navy.mil](mailto:gbcalthoun@nsn.cmar.navy.mil)

### Nauticus' Wisconsin Exhibits:

757-664-1000

[www.nauticus.org](http://www.nauticus.org)

[jenny.burge@norfolk.gov](mailto:jenny.burge@norfolk.gov)

### Wisconsin Project Partners:

USS Wisconsin Association:

[www.usswisconsin.org](http://www.usswisconsin.org)

Battleship Wisconsin Foundation:

[www.battleshipwisconsin.org](http://www.battleshipwisconsin.org)





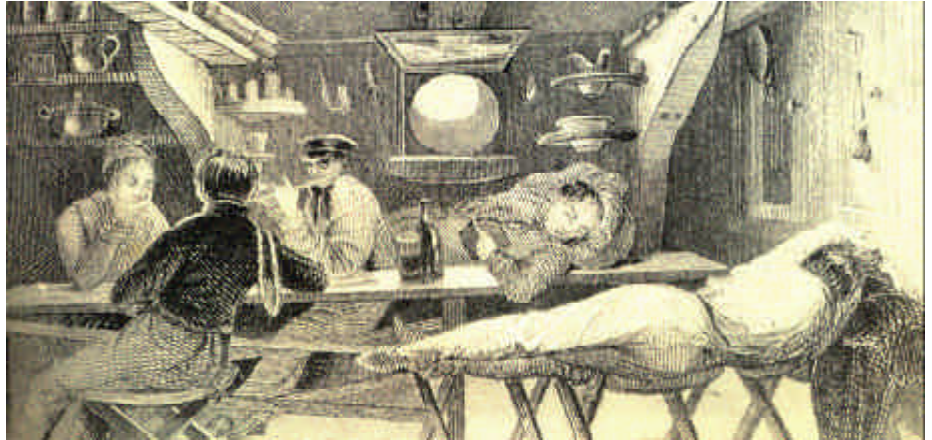
# The Reluctant Midshipman: The Journeys of Henry Myers

by Joe Mosier

At the age of sixteen, Henry Hyam Myers really, really, *really* wanted to be a naval officer. His teenage enthusiasm was natural. The navy had provided most of the heroes in the recently ended War of 1812, and his hometown of Norfolk was a Navy town. Henry was the twelfth child and youngest son of Moses Myers, an influential merchant who counted many of the U.S. Navy's highest-ranking officers among his friends. Both Samuel and James Barron had sailed for Moses Myers as merchant captains. Moses had owned property in Washington jointly with Thomas Truxtun and Thomas Tingey. Henry's oldest sister Adeline was a friend of Susan Wheeler Decatur, the wife of perhaps America's greatest naval hero. The captains of many navy ships had dined in the Myers home. They were men young Henry looked up to.

Whatever his motivations, Henry Myers pleaded with his father for his help in obtaining a warrant as a midshipman. Moses Myers agreed reluctantly. Henry also sought the assistance of his oldest brother John, then merchant in Baltimore. In letter written March 16, 1818, Henry wrote: "Pa is about to write to [President] James Monroe to get me a warrant, but if he is not put in mind of it, he may forget." Henry asked John to reinforce his request.

John Myers himself wrote to Norfolk congressman Thomas Newton who did not hold out much hope. In the post-war drawdown of personnel, opportunities were limited. Newton wrote to John in December 1818: "Previously to leaving the city [of Washington] last Spring I wrote a letter to the Secretary of the Navy recommending your brother to him. As soon as the new Secretary shall arrive I will again bring his pretensions to a warrant before the Secretary. I perform this request with much satisfaction, and will endeavor to obtain one



Officially, the Navy accepted boys as young as 12 (unofficially as young as 10) to begin training as a midshipman. Many, like Henry Myers, were lured to the occupation by tales of adventure from older officers. (Engraving from Beck's Iconographic Encyclopedia)

for him. Applications are numerous and few, if any, warrants are to be granted. Many blanks to a prize."

Representative Newton's letter points out another hurdle Henry faced: from whom was he to seek appointment. Benjamin W. Crowninshield served as Secretary of the Navy from January 16, 1815 to September 30, 1818. In his last year in the post, Crowninshield had worked at a slower and slower pace, turning many decisions over to the newly formed Board of Navy Commissioners. President Monroe was slow in naming his replacement. The man

controversial. His infrequent appearances in Washington seemed to confirm the doubts of his detractors. He set a record by being absent from the Navy Department from March 28 to December 8, 1819. How could Henry get a warrant from a Secretary who was never there?

Again family friends were able to help out. Among John Myers' friends was Benjamin Homans, Chief Clerk of the Navy Department. While no warrant could be issued without the absent Secretary's signature, Homans would turn a blind eye to Henry's sailing with a willing captain.

*"Pa is about to write to [President] James Monroe to get me a warrant, but if he is not put in mind of it, he may forget."*

*-An anxious Henry Myers writing to his oldest brother John*

he settled on was Chief Justice of the New York Supreme Court Smith Thompson. With no experience of maritime matters, Thompson was chosen to add geographic balance to Monroe's largely Southern cabinet. The new Secretary, although appointed in November 1818, did not take office until January 1, 1819. His choice was

John D. Henley was then serving as commander of the frigate *Congress* with orders to sail to China to support American merchant shipping in the Pacific. Henley, a Williamsburg native, was well known to the Myers family. He proved willing to take Henry along in the position

*Midshipman continued on page 7*



*Henry Myers' first ship was the frigate Congress, which sailed from Norfolk enroute to Brazil and China on April 17, 1819. She was the first American warship to arrive in China. Built in Portsmouth, NH, she was one of the six magnificently designed frigates authorized under the Naval Act of 1794 that included the likes of Constitution and Chesapeake. (Naval Historical Center photo of a painting by Antoine Roux)*

### ***Midshipman continued from page 6***

of "acting Midshipman."

Traditionally in the Royal Navy midshipman billets were filled by individual ships' captains. Only later would the youngster be given official standing by the Admiralty. Acting midshipmen, i.e. those without warrants signed in Washington, were relatively rare in the U.S. Navy. The practice was not unheard of but officially frowned upon since Navy annual manpower levels

warrant thinking those who had would not be satisfied to allow him the same privileges and consequently take advantage of it. I do not think this myself, though having a warrant would be more desirable. This would bring him into many disputes he said and applied last night to 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Mr. Allen for permission to go to Baltimore, which he was assured, our captain being absent, [Allen] did not feel authorized to do. I have had a long conversation with Henry this morning and

in insisting upon entering the Navy against the consent or wish of his family. My feelings at first were the same and had I known previous to entering the service what I now do, I should certainly have kept clean of it."

On the same afternoon that Etting wrote his letter, John Myers showed up onboard *Congress*. The oldest of six brothers and seventeen years older than Henry, John could be stern with his younger siblings. Behind his back the younger Myers boys referred to him as "Duke John." He quickly pointed out to Henry the obligations he had taken on by demanding family help. Henry's father and brothers had used substantial political capital to put him where he was. Henry must see things through. He must start his adult career like a man.

The lecture worked. Henry Etting was to write on May 14, 1819: "It is with extreme pleasure I can now inform you that your brother is satisfied and appears perfectly reconciled to his situation. He makes himself at home, and (as we say) is quite an old man o' war's man already. On his own account and his family's I am happy at this change." In fact, Henry was a little less sanguine. On May 15, he wrote his brother Abram: "We are still in Hampton Roads waiting for a wind, which I fear we will not have for two or three days. As for my part, I care not how soon we sail for I am tired of laying here. I am looking forward to my return. I go on this voyage to satisfy the

***Midshipman continued on page 8***

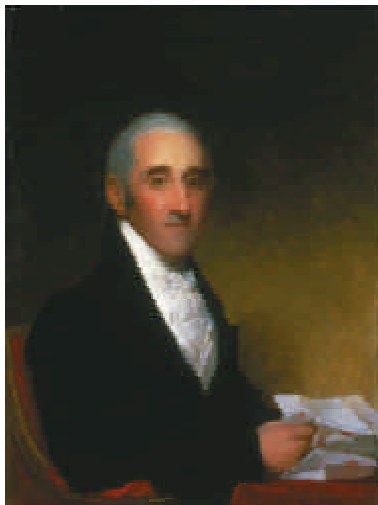
**"I have had a long conversation with Henry this morning and find him completely disgusted with the service - the manner of living, the duty and entirely different from his most distant idea."**

*-Midshipman Henry Etting on Henry's initial displeasure of Naval service*

required Congressional approval. Henry Myers was therefore faced with a completely unofficial beginning to his long sought career. It was not quite what he hoped for and his dissatisfaction grew quickly after he reported aboard *Congress* in April 1819.

A fellow midshipman, Henry Etting, wrote to one of young Myers' brothers, Abram, on April 28, 1819 as the ship lay off Annapolis: "I am sorry to inform you how very dissatisfied your brother appears. He in the first place regretted not having a

find him completely disgusted with the service - the manner of living, the duty and entirely different from his most distant idea. He again requested [from] Mr. A permission this morning and being refused as above, plainly told him he wished to leave the ship. [Allen] then referred him to Captain H[enley] on his return. This afternoon I have advised Henry differently though nothing will induce him to remain onboard, or continue in the Navy. This certainly if ever is the last time to quit having no warrant and never [having been] at sea. He acknowledges his obstinacy



*Moses Myers had married Eliza Judah Chapman, a young Canadian widow on Passover Eve in 1787. The couple immediately moved to Norfolk, Virginia. The city offered bright prospects for the young Jewish merchant in large part because of the state's Statute for Religious Freedom of 1786. Moses did well enough to have America's premier portrait artist Gilbert Stuart paint the portraits shown above. The couple did well, producing both wealth and a surfeit of offspring. For the next fourteen years, Eliza Myers gave birth on average every 16 months. Three of her twelve children died at infancy. It was full house during the years Henry grew up. (Photo of Gilbert Stuart paintings provided by the Chrysler Museum of Art and Historic Houses)*

## The Myers Family Scorecard

Family letters are the primary source for most of Henry's story. To help the reader understand who was writing to whom, here's a scorecard of the Myers family at the time Henry, then age 20, finally received his midshipman's warrant in 1821.

Moses Myers (father) – age 68, once arguably the most wealthy merchant in Norfolk, now semi-retired, firm went bankrupt in Panic of 1819, one-time President of Norfolk Common Council

Eliza Myers (mother) – age 58, considered a woman of great good humor, seems to have had special affection for her three youngest children

John Myers (brother) – age 34, merchant, firm of John Myers & Co, Baltimore also went bankrupt in 1819, major in Virginia militia, many influential friends, considered handsome to point of vanity, referred to by his brothers as "Duke John"

Samuel Myers (brother) – age 31 – settled as an attorney in Pensacola, Florida in 1821, had been acquitted of manslaughter in death of Richard Bowden in 1811, graduate of College of William & Mary in 1808, insightful, witty but impetuous

Adeline Myers (sister) – age 30 – by all reports a beautiful and accomplished woman, lived at home and never married, talented musician

Myer Myers (brother) – age 28 – merchant, spent most of 1818-1823 in Europe attempting to collect on debts owed to Moses Myers & Sons, would be the longest lived of the Myers children, dying in 1880 at the age of 84

Frederick Myers (brother) – age 25 – merchant and shopkeeper, did much of the actual work in attempting to straighten out Myers family finances

Augusta Myers (sister) – age 24 – unmarried, living at home

Abram Myers (brother) – age 21 – partner in Myers & Woodland, small commission merchant firm in Norfolk, had clerked for his brother John in Baltimore, Henry Myers' closest friend, would die of a brain abscess in September 1821

Mary Georgiana, "Georgie" (sister) – age 14 – the youngest of the brood, a sort of family pet in her youth, lived at home, never married

### *Midshipman continued from page 7*

wishes of the family & more I would do anything, or go to any lengths to render the family happy, even at my expense."

By April 17, the winds were favorable and *Congress* departed Hampton Roads for sea. The first task was to deliver U.S. Minister John Graham to Rio de Janeiro to take up his post as American ambassador. That completed, the frigate was ordered "upon important service for the protection of commerce of the United States in the Indian and China Seas." She rounded the Cape of Good Hope and headed through the Indian Ocean to the Straits of Sunda. These straits near Java were notorious for pirate attacks on U.S. and European shipping. A meeting with an American brig gave Henry a chance to write home. On September 21, 1819, he pleaded a lack of time to write fully, but assured the family he was well. Henry apologized for having no gifts to send, "but here they have no change and dollars are hard to part with."

*Congress* next called at Linten Island near Macao. The frigate's arrival in early November came as a surprise to Chinese officials. She was the first American warship to appear on the Chinese coast. The officials' immediate reaction was to order *Congress*' departure. Captain Henley talked this over with the U.S. Consul at Canton and decided to ignore the demand and to proceed up the Pearl River. In the face of his boldness, Chinese authorities relented and provided the frigate with requested provisions and supplies.

Henry celebrated New Year's Day 1820 with a letter to his brother Abram. In a letter that echoes thousands of others that navy men have written over the years, he wrote: "We are now off Linten in expectation of sailing & probably will sail tomorrow for Manila. We are to bring from there an immense sum of money & from here to take money to Bengal & Calcutta. I paid a short visit to Macao, as I was not able to go to Canton. It is a poor place. I purchased a fan and shawl for the girls....I shall get to Canton when we return here. We promise ourselves great pleasure at Manila. We spent Christmas on board the ship. It was not equal to those I spent at home. I expect you enjoyed yourselves among your friends. Often when I am forward smoking I think of you & of old times.... Give love to all the family. The

*Midshipman continued on page 9*



*Midshipman continued from page 8*

time will soon arrive when I hope I shall see you all as I left you.”

Family correspondence mentions letters from Henry dispatched from Manila in February and from Linten in early April. Unfortunately, no other letters from his round-the-world cruise survive.

Henry's gift shawl and fan arrived back in America in March 1820 aboard the merchant ship *Clothirr*. One of that ship's officers, Edward M. Donaldson, was also an old friend of John Myers. He provided John with the welcome news that Henry had adapted well to Navy life. Donaldson had spoken with Lieutenant Dale of *Congress* who described Henry as “a fine fellow and one of the most efficient midshipmen on board.” Donaldson was no doubt correct in thinking the news “cheering and will find its way to the heart of all his friends.”

Late in May 1821, *Congress* arrived back in Hampton Roads. Henry Myers' standing was confirmed in a letter his Division Officer, P. F. Voorhees, wrote to John Myers the next month. He felt “the services of your brother on the late cruise to China were highly useful and that the conduct of no one could have been more exemplary, or given higher proofs of abilities and correct deportment than was displayed in the general conduct of this valuable young man.” The problem now was what to do about making Henry's status legal. Captain Henley was the first to try



*Modern day portrayals have highly romanticized the institution of piracy. The reality of the situation, however, was much different as the pirates terrorized merchant ships of all nations. The U.S. Navy spent much of its resources in years following the War of 1812 fighting pirates off the coasts of Florida and Cuba. Hornet liberated a French brig from pirates whose captain later surrendered to the Navy schooners Shark and Grampus. The owners of the brig paid \$10,000 to Hornet's captain as a reward. (March 11, 1861 engraving from Harper's Weekly)*

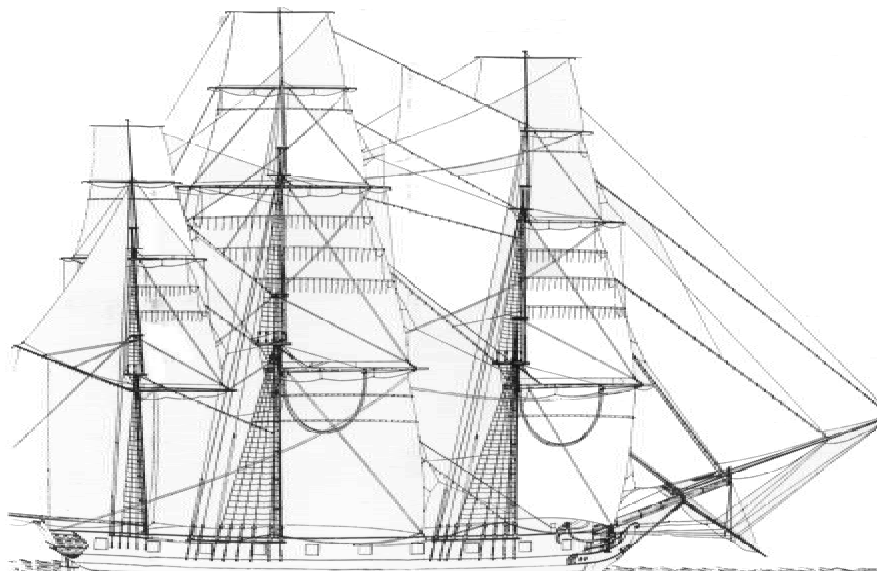
but found “that there will be some difficulty in his case in consequence of the authority by which he was received onboard the *Congress*.” Henley urged Henry to come up to Washington to pursue the matter personally.

At this point, Chief Clerk Homans seemed to be wishing he had never helped

in the matter. He wrote John Myers on June 23, 1821: “This subject is cause of much anxiety to me, and the more so because I doubt if the order or appointment will be confirmed. And I am aware of the consequent complaints and probable irritation to be produced, the force of all of which will fall upon me for doing an unauthorized act.

Since your brother went on board the *Congress*, The Secretary has put a stop to all appointments of the kind, and having previously given instructions absolutely prohibitory, and circumstances having tended to strengthen and confirm his determination, he has refused to sanction every one not emanating from himself. This will bring me into a very unpleasant predicament, of which no person can so fully judge as myself. You may think me unnecessarily timid, but I assure you the case is fraught with impending difficulties to me unless you can devise some means to take off from me the responsibility. I am morally certain that the plan will not avail to obtain a confirmation, that he was authorized by me to go [on] the cruise. It will meet a positive refusal. Other cases as strong as this have been most pertinaciously resisted during the last two years.”

*Midshipman continued on page 14*



*Henry's second ship was the sloop-of-war USS Hornet. Famed American maritime architect Josiah Fox designed both this ship and her sister ship USS Wasp in 1805 when the Jefferson administration asked for two fast brigs. The Navy riggered the ship as a sloop-of-war shortly before her highly successful War of 1812 operations. She was lost with all hands in a hurricane off the coast of Cuba in 1829. (National Archives)*

## Book Reviews

### *Civil War Ironclads: The U.S. Navy and Industrial Mobilization*

by William H. Roberts

Reviewed by Joe Judge

It is one of the most compelling images of the American Civil War at sea: a U.S. Navy monitor, cruising on the James River, black turret frowning at the shoreline. Sailors on deck walk on the skin of an ungainly iron monster fresh from a futuristic novel. Even today, after 140 years, the U.S. Navy monitors convey a sense of progressive technology, and represent daring experiment in the midst of crisis. How could they not convey these ideas, being such a radical departure from the wooden vessels of the old navy?

Of course, these famous ships were not discovered in a work of fiction – the fleet of Union monitors was a result of an ambitious building program that is the subject of a new book by William H. Roberts. *Civil War Ironclads: The U.S. Navy and Industrial Mobilization* examines the acquisition and

William H. Roberts. *Civil War Ironclads: The U.S. Navy and Industrial Mobilization*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2002. 320 pages. ISBN 0-801-86830-0. \$46.95.

logistics systems that built the monitors and kept them at sea. This topic has rarely been explored and the book marks a significant contribution to the study of the Civil War navy.

*Civil War Ironclads* covers the Navy's efforts to build and operate a fleet of new warships, as the author remarks, "one of the most ambitious programs in the history of naval shipbuilding." Due to the crisis of the war, the government turned to contractors to build the ships because the Navy's own yards were already overwhelmed. The Navy recognized that this situation called for new management techniques. The sea service created a special office to oversee the ironclad program, an office that was practically independent of the existing Navy administration. The key figure in this new office, and a key figure in the book, is Chief Engineer Alban Crocker Stimers, named

General Inspector of Ironclads.

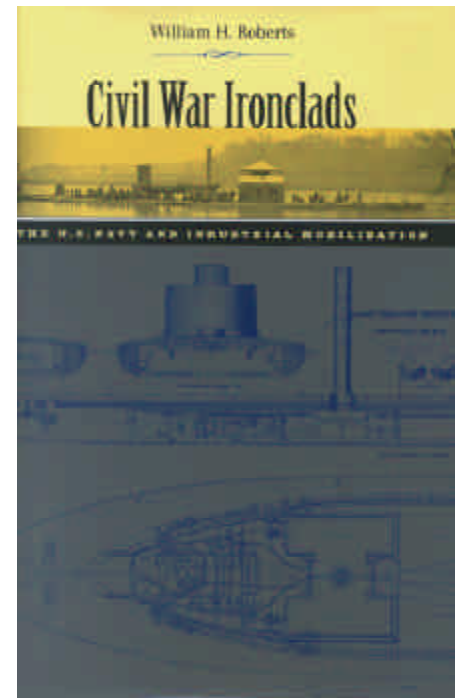
Stimers was a brave man who saved the original *Monitor* from foundering on her trip from New York to Hampton Roads, and then operated the turret during the battle of March 9<sup>th</sup> against CSS *Virginia*.

Stimers, the one-time golden child, met his Waterloo with a major construction program for light-draft monitors. John Ericsson's original design called for simple iron hulled-vessels, but Stimers redesigned them to be larger and more complex. As the building program progressed, the disaster emerged: when equipped for combat the light draft monitors would not float.

Roberts also addresses another source of this failure, one that lies with the Navy's philosophy of ship construction during the Civil War. Modifications devil any building project, and the management of modifications often spells the difference between success and failure. When the monitors showed defects, the Navy was faced with a choice: incorporate changes before the ships were completed (which Roberts calls "continuous improvement"), or wait until the ships were finished, then change them.


Fox and Stimers chose the path of "continuous improvement" and Roberts persuasively shows that it was a very bad decision. The contractors were driven mad by the constant changes demanded of them, all stemming from the unrealistic desire to have ships roll off the ways that did not need any type of modification. Roberts writes that the "single most important lesson from the industrial mobilization effort" can be summed up in the phrase: "better is the enemy of good enough."

*Civil War Ironclads* also contains important information about the relationship between the shipbuilding contractors and the government. The Navy constantly underestimated the difficulties faced by the shipbuilders. The sea service and the contractors engaged in a constant tug-of-war over the timely delivery of shipbuilding plans and the price of raw materials. As a result of unsophisticated contracting practices, 27 of



the 39 monitors ordered after mid-1862 were still under construction when the war ended.

The book addresses a complex subject that has been too often overlooked, not only in Civil War history, but also in naval history in general. The author does employ more than a little bit of jargon; jargon not from the Civil War but from modern-day staff meetings and economic textbooks. Terms like "variation selection," "accumulated sociotechnical momentum" and "velocity is a vector quantity" sprinkle the text waiting to stun the unsuspecting reader.

However, some readers will enjoy this treatment of unexplored history by an author who has thoroughly researched his topic. Those who have long experience with modern bureaucracies may even feel very much at home as Roberts details the political backbiting, mismanagement and outright stupidity that plagued the monitor building program. This reviewer even smiled as he recalled his early days of employment with the Navy, in which valuable hours were spent learning the "Total Quality Leadership" management philosophy. A cornerstone of this program was the doctrine of "continuous improvement." If only *Civil War Ironclads* had been written then! 



## Mutiny: A History of Naval Insurrection

by Leonard F. Guttridge

Reviewed by Hunt Lewis

At the outset, I must confess I had a predisposition to like *Mutiny* as soon as I saw Leonard Guttridge was the author. Another book of his co-written with Jay D. Smith, *The Commodores*, spurred my interest in the early U.S. Navy some years ago. Guttridge was an RAF pilot in WWII who in the postwar period turned to reporting and then to popular historical writing in magazines and books. His writing style is similar to that of David McCullough, which means that *Mutiny* is almost guaranteed to hold one's interest from its introduction through its final chapter.

The book is investigational recounting of the more well known naval insurrections and their aftermath from the 1750's through the 1970's including the *Bounty*, *Hermione*,

Leonard F. Guttridge. *Mutiny: A History of Naval Insurrection*. New York: Berkley Publishing, 2002, 318 pages. ISBN 0-425-18321-1. \$14.00.

Spithead and Nore, the U.S. brig *Somers*, the *Potemkin*, and Port Chicago. Particularly interesting, because they are much less known, are mutinies that occurred in European and South American navies during the first thirty-five years of the twentieth century. Also covered are the work stoppages over racial grievances on the *Constellation* and *Kitty Hawk* during the Vietnam war. Into this survey, he skillfully interweaves popular conceptions of mutiny as formed by the film *Cain Mutiny*, the novel *Billy Budd* by Herman Melville, and the actual, but novelistic "Arnheiter Affair."

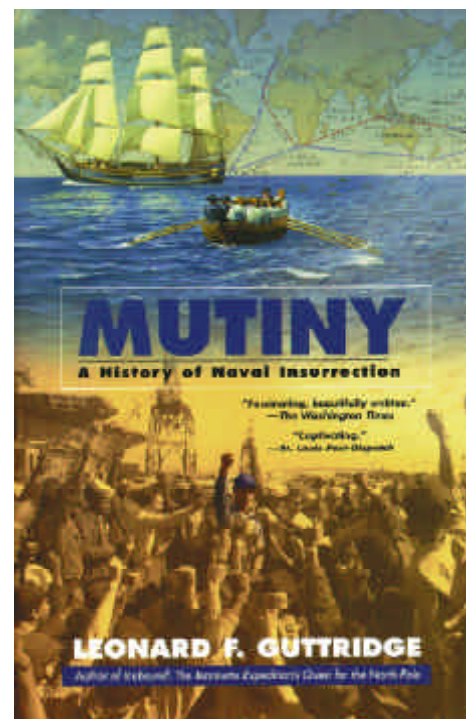
There are three themes to the book. The first is What is Mutiny? What is mutinous conduct? Can a single person Mutiny? Must it be a conspiracy? Must there be violence? Must a mutinous act be implemented or is the consideration of the act mutiny in itself? Must there be an attempt to overthrow authority since some "mutinies" were

protests against living conditions with no intent to overthrow? Guttridge traces the development of the legal concepts of mutiny through the English "Articles of War" (which were adopted almost verbatim into the early U.S. Navy), refined in the *Articles for the Government of the Navy* and in *Naval Courts and Boards* (1923), and currently stated in the *Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ)*. He points out that in Britain over a period of time the essence of mutiny became collective insubordination, while within the United States the concept of individual mutiny took hold and was codified in Article 94 of the current *UCMJ*. The latter is so broad in its definitions of mutinous conduct that any "refusal to obey orders or perform duty" could be considered an element of the mutinous conduct of intending to "usurp or override lawful military authority."


The second theme is "What causes mutiny?" Dr. James E. Valle, author of *Rock and Shoals, Order and Discipline in the Old Navy 1800-1861*, stated in his 1993 review of the hardcover edition of *Mutiny* in *The American Neptune*: "His [Guttridge] most important discovery seems to be that naval crews make a conscious decision to obey their officers, and that mutiny in its many forms occurs primarily when management, insensitivity, or bad judgement on the part of the leadership drives the sailors to revolt...The combination of poor leadership and institutional mismanagement is particularly dangerous."

The third is the development of publications, such as *The Fleet* (1904) in Britain and in *Our Navy* (1906) in the U.S. and "lower deck societies" in the British navy which give voice to the sailor. Similar societies never developed in the U.S. Navy because of better living conditions and leadership was more responsive.

Reviewing the informative endnotes shows the *Mutiny* was obviously well researched, but the lack of footnotes makes further pursuit of specific instances difficult. This is true for his other books as well. I



did find one, to me, inconsequential error – three U.S. WW II patrol frigates are misidentified as destroyer escorts in the discussion of the mutinous flagship HMS *Lothian*. Guttridge also differs from Dr. Valle as to whether two brothers were hung from a single ship or separate ships after the mutinous brothers had assaulted the midshipman in charge of the launch from U.S. sloop-of-war *Warren*, thrown him overboard, and departed for the California gold fields, but this differences may have resulted from the use of different source material.

Although many offenses today might be elevated to mutiny under the *UCMJ*, it seldom seems charged today; perhaps, because the very charging of mutiny tacitly admits a failure in leadership, and because the U.S. Navy takes pains to avoid the conditions in which mutiny brews. Besides being interesting naval history, *Mutiny* could well be considered a fascinating leadership text (if that is not an oxymoron). 





# A 100th Anniversary You Don't Know About But Should

Much of popular history is built around anniversaries. We have found them to be a simple, yet effective way to both remember and reflect upon events in American history. Many anniversaries are military in nature, such as the beginning and end of wars, but not all.



## The Museum Sage

The ceremony for the September 11 terrorist attacks comes readily to mind as does the commemoration of the surprise attack upon Pearl Harbor on December 7, and the June 6 landings in Normandy during World War II. We are in the process right now of marking the 50th anniversary of the Korean War.

The year 2001 was the 100th anniversary of the official end of the Filipino Insurrection. At this point you might be thinking "Filipino what? What insurrection? Filipinos and Americans seem to get along so well today." You are correct, today we do. At many levels it is a friendship that is quite remarkable and we should deeply cherish, as Filipino-Americans make up a sizable section of both the Federal work force and the general population here in Hampton Roads.

Some will correctly point out that the Filipino Insurrection really didn't end until the United States promised to grant the Pacific colony independence during World

War II. Several groups, the Moros in particular, continued to resist for several decades after 1901.

The history of this war, which officially lasted from 1898 to 1901, dropped off the history radar screen within a few years after it ended so don't feel too embarrassed for not knowing about it. For all their patriotic "U.S.A. , U.S.A.," slant, many contemporary histories of the Spanish-American War do include some very long and descriptive essays about the war. But after that, \*poof\* it's gone. By the time of World War I in 1917, the word "Filipino Insurrection" disappeared from historians' lexicon. Since then, there have been a few scholarly works written about the Filipino Insurrection, namely *Schoolbooks and Krags* by Dr. John M. Gates (The Sage's mentor at college).

In any case, here is a crash course on the Filipino Insurrection. The U.S. Navy's Asiatic Squadron, under the command of the immortal of Adm. George Dewey, crushed the Spanish squadron in the Battle of Manila Bay. The battle did not need to be fought, and the Philippines were not in the original objectives of the Spanish-American War. However, the United States took full advantage of the situation and decided to annex the islands.

Needless to say, many Filipinos were not exactly thrilled at the prospect of having another Western power take control of their country. After all, they had been fighting with Spanish authorities long before the Spanish-American War, and were not about switch one group of foreign rulers for another. Led by their very capable leader Aguinaldo, the Filipinos elected to resist American rule.

A debate erupted in the United States over the merits of war. Those in favor of staying in the Philippine Islands made the argument that the new fleet the United States was building needed reliable coaling stations, and Manila Bay made an excellent location for a naval station. They also made




Sailors from the battleship USS Oregon (BB-3) and two gunboats prepare to engage Filipino rebels in northern Luzon, 1901. (HRNM photo of a 1902 painting by Henry Reuterdaul)

a bandwagon-type argument by pointing out that all the other European powers had overseas colonies, why not us?

Critics, which included famed author Samuel Clemens, denounced the war as wholly un-American. They pointed out that the United States was not Europe, and didn't occupy other foreign people.

As the debate back home raged on, both branches of the American military were heavily engaged in the conflict. The Army called upon several state militia units to serve, and the Navy effectively used a combination of heavy blue-water ships like the battleship *Oregon* and cruiser *Charleston*, and smaller ships like the Newport News-built gunboat *Helena* to eventually bring the war to a conclusion.

However, the war was quite a mess. It went on longer than most expected, there were accusations of civilian massacres, and even after Aguinaldo surrendered, many parts of the country refused to quit fighting. There were no large pitched battles like Manila Bay or Gettysburg, just a number of small, yet fierce actions.

It is a war that we need to remember. It was very controversial, ugly, and not very patriotic. At the same time, there is much to learn about how one can effectively wage a counter-insurgency campaign, using small unit tactics and warships in a littoral conflict. Our Filipino friends have not forgotten about this war and neither should the rest of us. 

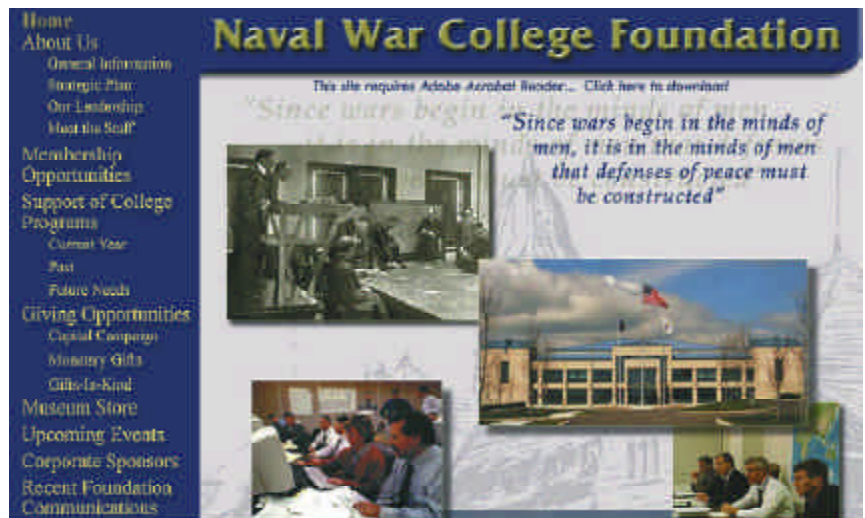
# Useful Websites



**Hampton Roads Naval Historical Foundation**

If you would like to have a flag flown over the battleship Wisconsin...click here!

**[www.hrnmm.navy.mil/hrnhf.html](http://www.hrnmm.navy.mil/hrnhf.html)**-This is the web location of the Hampton Roads Naval Historical Foundation (HRNHF). The HRNHF is the non-profit fundraising group that supports the Hampton Roads Naval Museum's exhibits, education programs, and events. HRNHF raises money through grants and a gift shop located at the Naval Station Norfolk Tour and Information Center.



**Naval War College Foundation**

Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that defenses of peace must be constructed

**[www.nwcfoundation.org](http://www.nwcfoundation.org)**-This is the website for the Naval War College Foundation. This foundation supports both the Naval War College and the Naval War College Museum. It assists in endowing academic chairs, acquiring books for the library, artifact acquisition for the museum, and student academic awards. In 2002, NWC co-sponsored the Malcolm Muir luncheon lecture with the Hampton Roads Naval Museum.

## Corrections and Horrible Errors

In the article about the AMC Terminal exhibit, the aerial photo of the hangars was misidentified. They are not the "SP" hangars, but rather Hangar LP-12. The exhibit is also slated to go up sometime early next year.

*Midshipman continued from page 9*

To break the impasse, Henry and his father went personally to Washington. They made the rounds of friends with influence. While their arguments were not recorded, they met with success. On September 7, 1821 Secretary Thompson wrote to Henry with the good news that his warrant as a midshipman had been issued. More importantly the warrant itself was made effective as of April 1, 1819. The China cruise had not been in vain. The now official midshipman went to Richmond to show off his uniform to acquaintances. A friend wrote, "Henry appears to be in the high life and favor of the fair ladies in his circle. Henry speaks particularly of a pretty, etc.,

stopped. The coasts of Cuba and Puerto Rico, however, were still infested with pirates. Spanish authorities on those islands were angry at what they saw as United States support for the rebelling colonies. In retaliation, they turned a blind eye to the pirates' activities. To combat this piracy, the Navy Department created the West Indies Squadron on March 26, 1822. Lieutenant Matthew C. Perry, commanding one of the schooners in the squadron, would give his views on the matter to Squadron Commodore James Biddle. "My several expeditions have become acquainted with a system of abominable fraud [and] rapine ... openly permitted by the Spanish Authorities

office in Pensacola, Florida. It seemed more likely the sloop-of-war might make a port visit there. Moreover, *Hornet* was commanded by Robert Henley, brother of his last captain and a long-time friend of Henry's brother John. Henry reported aboard in late April 1821.

Days before the sloop sailed from Norfolk, Henry had some excitement ashore. About 11:30 p.m. on the night of April 30, a fire broke out among the warehouses on Town Point. Such blazes were fairly common in Norfolk during the first quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Midshipman Myers took a party ashore to help fight the fire. Among the buildings

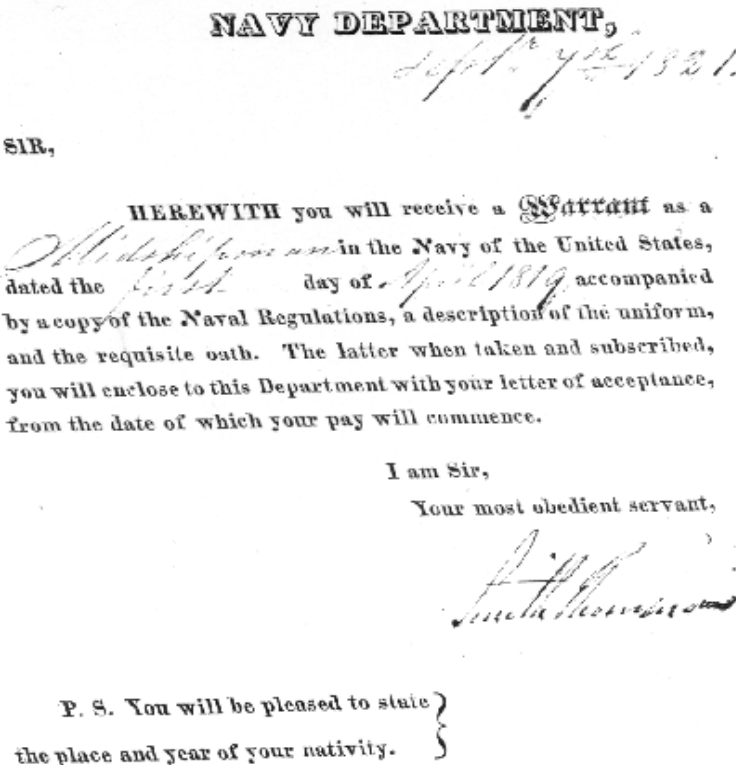
destroyed was a warehouse owned by John McPhail that contained a cargo consigned to the Myers family business. As Henry described it, "McPhail took the liberty of insulting the *old man*. I at that time having been sent on shore with 30 men from the *Hornet* took the liberty to chastise him. The next day [McPhail] was armed with a brace of pistols for me, but our getting under way the next day prevented his cowardly revenge."

*Hornet* departed Hampton Roads about May 7 and proceeded south, stopping merchant vessels in hopes of gathering information on pirate activity. On July 4, 1822, Henry described the cruise in a letter to his brother Samuel at Pensacola: "When I left Norfolk, I expected our ship would have gone direct to

Havana & from thence to Pensacola, instead of which we visited off St Bartholomew, St John, St Thomas & Cape Francois, and now we arrive at Havana, having met the frigate *Macedonian* at Cape Francois & he (commanding) orders us here to await her arrival.... I however think that if we will spend the hurricane months with you [at Pensacola].... We have not as yet had the pleasure of seeing any pirates."

After leaving Havana later in July, *Hornet* cruised off the north coast of Cuba. Working with her were the United States Schooners *Shark*, commanded by Lt.

*Midshipman continued on page 15*



Judge Smith Thompson of New York served as the sixth Secretary of the Navy and eventually signed Henry's midshipman's warrant (shown at left) after being lobbied by Henry's father. Thompson had a sharp legal mind and was later appointed to the Supreme Court, but was notoriously absent from Washington while serving in the Navy Department. At one point, he was missing for nine months straight. (U.S. Naval Institute photo/Warrant from the Moses Myers Papers)

etc., etc. Miss Rebecca Myers." If courtship was on Henry's mind it must have been short-lived. In November he was ordered to report to Lieutenant William H. Watson onboard the frigate *Guerriere* in Norfolk. There he enrolled as student at the Nautical School under the direction of the Reverend Mr. Adams. This schooling continued at least through March 1822.

During the wars of liberations fought by Spain's American colonies, most of the rebelling states issued privateering licenses to all comers. This resulted in a heavy toll of captured American merchant vessels. By 1819, most this quasi-legal piracy had been

and encouraged by the most wealthy men in the island. There is not a fisherman who is not a pirate, nor a canoe that is not a pirate vessel in miniature. The plundered goods are publicly sold at the large commercial towns, and the first merchants become the purchasers."

After finishing his schooling Henry was given a choice of orders to either the frigate *John Adams* or the sloop-of-war *Hornet*. Both ships were scheduled to conduct anti-piracy operations in the West Indies. Henry chose the smaller of the vessels as it seemed to offer the better chance to excel. Also his brother Samuel Myers had opened a law





This is Henry Myers' dirk (shown above) and his octant (shown at right). Henry's death occurred so close to arriving back at Norfolk that it insured these objects would go back to the family. They are now displayed in the Consul Room of the Moses Myers House. (Photos provided by the Chrysler Museum of Art and Historic Houses)

#### *Midshipman continued from page 14*

Matthew C. Perry, and *Grampus*, under Lt. Francis H. Gregory. On July 10, off Matanzas, Captain Henley spotted a brig which seemed to be acting strangely. On stopping the vessel, he learned she was a French brig carrying slaves from Africa which had been taken by pirates. Lieutenant Cornelius Stribling, one midshipman and a prize crew took over the brig and sailed her into Havana harbor. There the brig was released to authorities and Henley was rewarded with \$10,000 in doubloons as payment for salvage.

The captain of the recaptured brig identified the schooner from which the pirates had attacked. Henley sent *Shark* and *Grampus* in chase. They cornered the outlaw schooner near the Pan of Matanzas. While the pirate captain was ready to fight, his crew decided the odds were too great and made their way to shore by swimming or in boats. *Shark's* crew seized the pirate schooner. Midshipman Myers' journal for July 25 contains the following entry: "6:30 hove to, the *Shark* bearing down for us. 7:30 Capt. Perry came on board. 8 filled away, the *Shark's* prize, *Bandannat* in company. 9 Capt. Perry returned to the *Shark*. At 9:45 the *Shark* made several signals. 11 made signal for the *Shark* to cast off the prize & make sail in chase. 12 took the prize in tow." The next day Henry's journal contains the third person report that at "6 p.m. sent Mid. Myers on board the prize to proceed to Thompson's Island [present-day Key West] & bring off a pilot."

Key West was newly purchased American territory. Here the Navy set up a hospital to treat the inevitable cases of yellow fever that would appear in any vessel spending long

patrols in the area. Midshipman Lynch of *Shark* described the facilities: "Our hastily erected and scantily furnished hospital was soon crowded with the sick, the dying and the newly dead...He alone, who has laid on a rude pallet in the ward of a hospital, crowded with the victims of a malignant

**"The services of your brother on the late cruise to China were highly useful and that the conduct of no one could have been more exemplary, or given higher proofs of abilities and correct deportment than was displayed in the general conduct of this valuable young man."**


*-Lt. P. F. Voorhees' comments about Henry Myers to his brother John after Henry's service on board Congress*

disease, can realize the horrors of such a state." Yellow fever was more of a threat than battle action against the pirates. The Squadron flagship *Macedonian* had already been forced to return to Norfolk with forty-nine officers and men dead and eighty-four more on the sick list. To this point *Hornet* had proved a healthy ship with only twelve men on the sick list. Departing from Key West about August 4, the sloop avoided being seriously touched by the disease. On the voyage only fifteen crewmembers showed symptoms of yellow fever on the voyage home.

The ship's arrival in Norfolk brought devastating news for the Myers family. The *Norfolk Herald* of August 12, 1822 reported: "The U.S. sloop of war *Hornet*, Capt. R. Henley, anchored last evening between Craney Island and Fort Norfolk from a cruise

and seven days from Havana.... We regret to learn that Mr. HENRY MYERS, a midshipman on board the *Hornet*, and the youngest son of MOSES MYERS, Esq. of this Borough, departed this life on Friday last, after an illness of five days. In the death of this amiable young man his family has experienced a heavy affliction, and his country been deprived of the services of an officer who justified the fairest anticipations of future usefulness and professional eminence." Henry's was the only yellow fever death aboard *Hornet*. All of the other fourteen men who had contracted the disease survived.

The Myers family were consoled by the officers of *Hornet* "with whom no one of his age was more beloved and to his family an irreparable loss – for he had developed that frankness of character, amiable disposition and great integrity which would have gained him friends wherever he went & strengthened the standing & reputation of his family." Another friend wrote to Moses and his wife Eliza, "My dear friends

for the sake of your remaining children, bear up against misfortune. They claim it from you. Shut not your hearts against them, by brooding on past considerable calamities, but seek comfort in what remains to you now, and will I hope remain a blessing to you hereafter. We have all been long convinced that this is a world of woe. The departed rest in peace, it is with us the survivors to support the weight of afflictions. Let us bear them with fortitude & submit to the divine will who for all wise purposes has thought fit to increase our sufferings." By surviving accounts, Moses bore this affliction better than did his wife. Eliza Myers seems to have been deflated by this loss, coming as it did the year after the death of her next-to-youngest son Abram. The next year in 1823, she was to die in Canada of what her family felt was a broken heart. 

## Hampton Roads Naval Museum: The Early Years



In what can only be described as a very early attempt to create the Hampton Roads Naval Museum, the Navy assembled this display as a part of its exhibit for the 1876 Centennial Celebration Exposition in Philadelphia. The display contained a monument made of wood, and items from ships lost in the Hampton Roads area during the Civil War, including CSS *Florida*, USS *Cumberland*, USS *Merrimack*, USS *Delaware*, USS *Columbia*, USS *Columbus*, USS *Pennsylvania*, USS *United States*, and USS *Raritan*. (Naval Historical Center photo)

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## In Our Next Issue...

- *Reconstructing Gosport*
- Book Reviews: *The Rebel Raiders: The Astonishing History of the Confederacy's Secret Navy and Fighting Sail on Lake Huron and Georgian Bay*

